

What is claimed is:

1. A retroreflective element having an exposed outer surface comprising optical elements and an interior cavity.

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2. The retroreflective element of claim 1 wherein the exposed outer surface consists of the viewing surface of preformed retroreflective sheeting.

10 3. The retroreflective element of claim 2 wherein the retroreflective sheeting is selected from the group comprising exposed-lens sheeting and enclosed-lens sheeting.

4. The retroreflective elements of claim 2 wherein the retroreflective sheeting is exposed-lens sheeting comprising a specular reflective coating spaced apart from a monolayer of optical elements.

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5. The retroreflective element of claim 1 wherein the optical elements comprise glass microspheres, glass-ceramic microspheres, cube corner elements, and combinations thereof.

20 6. The retroreflective element of claim 1 wherein the optical elements are at least partially embedded in a polymeric layer.

7. The pavement marking of claim 1 wherein the optical elements are selected from transparent microspheres, colored transparent microspheres, and microspheres having a 25 specular reflecting coating.

8. The retroreflective element of claim 1 wherein the cavity is discontinuous.

9. A retroreflective article comprising the retroreflective elements of claim 1 at least 30 partially embedded in a binder.

10. A surface comprising a plurality of the retroreflective elements of claim 1 partially embedded in a binder.
- 5 11. A retroreflective element having an exposed outer surface comprising optical elements and a discreet interior layer comprising optical elements.
12. A surface comprising a plurality of the retroreflective elements of claim 11 partially embedded in a binder.
- 10 13. The retroreflective element of claim 11 wherein the optical elements are provided by retroreflective sheeting.
- 15 14. A pavement marking comprising retroreflective elements partially embedded in a binder wherein the coefficient of retroreflected luminance is at least 2000 mcd/m²/lux when dry.
- 20 15. A pavement marking comprising retroreflective elements partially embedded in a binder wherein the coefficient of retroreflected luminance is at least 1500 mcd/m²/lux when wet.
- 25 16. A method of making retroreflective elements comprising:
 providing an elongated member having a lengthwise surface; and
 bonding retroreflective sheeting about the elongated member such that the lengthwise surface is substantially covered with the major viewing surface of the sheeting.
- 30 17. The method of claim 16 wherein the elongated member is a core material.
18. The method of claim 17 wherein the core material is a filament, a polymeric material, and combinations thereof.
19. The method of claim 16 wherein the elongated member is a tool.

20. The method of claim 16 wherein the retroreflective sheeting overlaps with itself.

21. The method of claim 16 further comprising cutting in a direction normal to the lengthwise surface forming discreet elements.